

1. Omit      2. Rephrase      3. Revise

Mrs. Schmidt

Conciseness

Name \_\_\_\_\_

### CONCISENESS: Avoiding Common Types of Wordiness

Excess words and phrases can *clog* your writing and make it less clear. Generally, two ways can eliminate wordiness:

- Compress what you mean into the fewest possible words. *Omit words, not meaning.*
- Don't tell your readers what they already know, don't need to know, or can infer.

1. **Redundant Pairs** *Repeats same idea using extra unnecessary words.*

*Example:* Before the travel agent was completely able to finish explaining the various differences between all of the many vacation packages her travel agency was offering, the customer changed his future plans.

*Revised:* \_\_\_\_\_

2. **Redundant Categories**

*Example:* During that time period, many car buyers tended to prefer cars that were red in color, shiny in appearance, and sporty in style.

*Revised:* \_\_\_\_\_

3. **Meaningless Modifiers**

*Example:* For all intents and purposes, American industrial productivity generally depends on certain factors that are really more psychological in kind than of any given technological aspect.

*Revised:* \_\_\_\_\_

4. **Stating the Obvious**

*Example:* Imagine a mental picture of someone engaged in the intellectual activity of trying to learn what the rules are for how to play the game of chess.

*Revised:* \_\_\_\_\_

*Omit,  
rephrase,  
revise*

Too much  
5. **Excessive Detail** *omit, revise*

*Example:* Baseball, one of our oldest and most popular outdoor summer sports in terms of total attendance at ball parks and viewing on television, has the kind of rhythm of play on the field that alternates between the players' passively waiting with no action taking place between the pitches to the batter and exploding into action when the batter hits a pitched ball to one of the players and he fields it.

*Revised:* \_\_\_\_\_

6. **Phrases instead of Words** *omit phrases, replace with 1-2 words*

*Example:* As you carefully read what you have written to improve your wording and catch small errors of spelling, punctuation, and so on, the thing to do before you do anything else is to try to see where full sentences could be replaced by sequences of phrases.

*Revised:* \_\_\_\_\_

7. **Verbs Smothered in Nouns** *change phrase to 1 verb*

*Example:* The committee made the decision to...

*Revised:* \_\_\_\_\_

*Example:* They entered into an agreement to...

*Revised:* \_\_\_\_\_

8. **Common Phrases** *Revise*

*Example:* It is possible that nothing will come of these preparations.

*Revised:* \_\_\_\_\_

9. **Unnecessary *there is* and *there are* sentence beginnings**

*Example:* ~~There are~~ <sup>that</sup> four rules to observe.... *Revise*

*Revised:* \_\_\_\_\_

10. **Other Unnecessary Words** *omit, revise*

■ *Example:* The evidence we have....

*Revised:* \_\_\_\_\_

■ *Example:* All applicants who are interested in the job must....

*Revised:* \_\_\_\_\_

■ *Example:* An account was opened by Mrs. Sims.

*Revised:* \_\_\_\_\_

■ *Example:* The duty of a clerk is to check all incoming mail and then to record it.

*Revised:* \_\_\_\_\_